



Policy & Handbook
2026-2027



Dear Families,

Welcome to Ocean Breeze School!

We are so excited to welcome your family to our community. Whether your child is joining our toddler program or one of our preschool classrooms, we are honored to be part of this important stage in their early childhood journey.

At Ocean Breeze School, we believe childhood should be filled with curiosity, creativity, exploration, and meaningful relationships. We are committed to creating a warm, nurturing environment where children feel safe, supported, and excited to learn each day. We recognize that every child develops at their own pace, and we celebrate the unique strengths, interests, and personality each child brings to our school.

Our goal is to nurture the whole child. Through play-based learning, hands-on experiences, and meaningful interactions, we support children's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development while fostering independence, confidence, kindness, and a lifelong love of learning.

One of the things that makes Ocean Breeze School so special is the strong partnership we build with our families. We believe that open communication, trust, and collaboration create the foundation for a successful school experience. Together, we can provide the consistency and support children need to grow and thrive.

Our dedicated teachers are passionate about early childhood education and are committed to creating classrooms where every child feels valued, capable, and loved. Whether your child is taking their first steps into a classroom as a toddler or preparing for kindergarten, we are here to encourage, support, and celebrate every milestone along the way.

This handbook has been designed to help familiarize you with our policies, procedures, and daily routines. We encourage you to read through it carefully and refer back to it throughout the school year. If you ever have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out—we are always happy to help.

Thank you for choosing Ocean Breeze School. We are grateful for the opportunity to be part of your child's early years and look forward to a wonderful year together.

Warmly,

Mrs. Kasandra DePauw
Director, Ocean Breeze School

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Ocean Breeze School Philosophy

At OBS our philosophy is reflected in our goals and principles.

- We respect and recognize the individual needs of the children. Each child comes to us with their own background, experiences, and learning styles. We strive to create an inclusive environment where each child's voice is heard and valued.
- We strive to foster each child's intellectual, emotional, social, and physical growth. Intellectual growth is nurtured through engaging activities that stimulate curiosity and critical thinking. Emotional development is supported by creating a safe space where children can express their feelings and learn about empathy and cooperation. Social skills are cultivated through group interactions that encourage teamwork and communication. Physical growth is promoted through active play that develops motor skills and coordination.
- We provide a balance of individual, small group, and large group experiences to support each child's unique way of learning. Individual activities allow children to explore at their own pace, while small groups encourage cooperation and meaningful interactions with peers. Large group experiences help build classroom community and foster a sense of belonging. Throughout the day, children are encouraged to express themselves creatively through art, music, movement, and dramatic play.
- We promote positive attitudes towards learning, self-confidence, independence, and readiness for future school experiences. Our goal is to instill a love for learning in every child. We celebrate effort over outcome to help children develop resilience in the face of challenges. By providing opportunities for independent exploration within a supportive framework, we help children build self-confidence in their abilities. This foundation prepares them for lifelong learning.

OBS prioritizes your child's social, emotional, educational, creative, and physical growth. Our approach weaves together all facets of development into daily activities, enabling children to flourish as well-rounded individuals.

Non-Discrimination and Diversity Policy

Ocean Breeze School values a diverse, multicultural, and inclusive school community. We are committed to providing an environment in which all children and families are treated with dignity and respect and are not discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender, physical attributes, ability, learning style, or other characteristics protected by applicable law.

Board of Directors

Ocean Breeze School is a nonprofit organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board provides oversight to support the school's mission and long-term success.

The Director reports directly to the Board of Directors and is responsible for the day-to-day operation and management of the school.

Required Forms & Consents

Prior to a child's first day of school, all required enrollment forms and consent forms must be completed and submitted. Enrollment is not considered complete until all required documentation has been received by Ocean Breeze School.

The following forms are required and are included at the end of this handbook.

Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)

- Massachusetts Regulations Form – Required by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).

Ocean Breeze School Consent Forms

- Procare Photo Sharing Consent – Grants permission for photographs and videos of your child to be shared with currently enrolled Ocean Breeze School families through Procare.
- Public Photo & Media Release – Grants permission for Ocean Breeze School to use photographs or videos of your child for promotional purposes, including the school's website, public social media platforms, brochures, newsletters, advertisements, and other school publications.
- Pizza Friday Permission Form – Indicates whether your child will participate in Ocean Breeze School's optional Pizza Friday program.
- Bathroom Assistance Authorization – Authorizes Ocean Breeze School staff to provide age-appropriate assistance with toileting, including changing soiled clothing when necessary.

- Walking Trip Permission – Grants permission for your child to participate in supervised walking trips in the immediate area surrounding Ocean Breeze School.
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgment – Confirms that you have received, read, and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in this Parent Handbook.

Tuition & Attendance Policy

Ocean Breeze School tuition is based on an annual tuition rate, which is divided into ten equal monthly payments. Tuition is billed in advance for the upcoming month, while additional charges, such as Early Drop-Off, Lunch, and Extended Day, are billed at the end of the month in which they are used.

The first tuition invoice for the school year is issued on August 1, and the final tuition invoice is issued on May 1. Although the May invoice is the final tuition payment for the school year, any additional charges incurred during the month of June, including Early Drop-Off, Lunch, and Extended Day, will be billed at the end of June.

Families with more than one child enrolled at Ocean Breeze School receive a 10% sibling discount, which is applied to the child with the lower monthly tuition.

Tuition invoices are available in Procare on the 1st of each month and are due by the 10th of the month. A \$15 late fee will be applied to any unpaid balance after the 10th.

Payments must be made through Procare via ACH bank transfer. Cash and personal checks are not accepted.

Tuition reserves your child's place in the program and is not based on attendance. Therefore, tuition is not adjusted for absences, vacations, holidays, scheduled school closures, or weather-related closures. If your child experiences an extended illness lasting more than two consecutive weeks, please contact the Director to discuss the circumstances.

Families planning to return for the following school year will be billed the annual registration deposit through Procare upon submission of their registration during the winter enrollment period.

Withdrawal

If you choose to withdraw your child from Ocean Breeze School, a minimum of two weeks' written notice is required. Tuition will continue to be charged during the two-week notice period or through the withdrawal date if a later date is provided.

The two-week notice requirement applies when a family voluntarily withdraws a child.

School-initiated suspension or termination of enrollment is governed by the applicable school policies, including the Compliance with School Policies and Behavior Support & Safety policies.

Failure to pay tuition or repeated late payments may result in the suspension or termination of enrollment. Ocean Breeze School reserves the right to pursue collection of any outstanding balances.

Student Records

Ocean Breeze School maintains a confidential record for every enrolled child in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) regulations.

Student records are confidential and will not be shared with or released to individuals who are not directly involved in implementing your child's program or otherwise authorized by law without the written consent of the parent or guardian, except as permitted or required by law.

Parents and guardians have the right to review their child's record upon request. Ocean Breeze School will make the record available within **two (2) business days** of the request, as required by EEC regulations.

Parents and guardians also have the right to:

- Add comments, information, or other relevant materials to their child's record.
- Request corrections to information they believe is inaccurate.
- Receive copies of documents contained within their child's record, as permitted by EEC regulations.
- Receive a copy of the school's Student Records Policy upon request.

Student records are maintained securely and are accessible only to authorized personnel.

Confidentiality

Ocean Breeze School is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of every child and family. Information regarding a child, family, or staff member is considered confidential and will only be shared with individuals who have a legitimate educational or legal need to know.

To protect the privacy of all families, Ocean Breeze School will not discuss another child's behavior, development, health, services, evaluations, individualized support plans, disciplinary actions, enrollment status, or any other confidential information. Likewise, we ask that families respect the privacy of others by refraining from requesting information about another child or family.

When an incident occurs involving multiple children, the parents or guardians of each child directly involved will be notified promptly and provided with information regarding

their own child's care and any necessary follow-up. However, to protect the privacy of all families, the school will not share identifying information or discuss actions taken regarding another child.

We appreciate our families' understanding and partnership in maintaining a respectful, supportive, and confidential school community.

School License

Ocean Breeze School is licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). Parents have the right to contact EEC for information regarding Ocean Breeze School's regulatory compliance history.

Department of Early Education and Care
360 Merrimack Street
Building 9, 3rd Floor
Lawrence, MA 01843
(978) 609-0309
Licensor: Yesenia Ramos

Emergency Numbers

Emergencies	911
Marblehead Police Dept	(781) 631-1212
Marblehead Fire Dept	(781) 631-0142
Poison Control	1-800-222-1222
North Shore Children's Hospital 57 Highland Ave Salem MA 01970	(978) 741-1200

Ocean Breeze School Health Care Policy & Health Care Consultant

At Ocean Breeze School, the health and well-being of our students and staff are a top priority. Our Health Care Policy is designed to provide a safe and healthy environment where children can learn, play, and thrive while helping to reduce the spread of illness within our school community.

When Should My Child Stay Home?

Children should remain home if they exhibit any of the following symptoms or conditions:

- Severe congestion or excessive runny nose
- Persistent cough or sore throat
- Fever of 100°F or higher, chills, or feeling feverish
- Difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell
- New muscle aches
- Gastrointestinal symptoms, including nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Any contagious illness or condition, including but not limited to COVID-19, influenza, strep throat, respiratory infections, Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease, conjunctivitis (pink eye), impetigo, chickenpox, or other contagious rashes or illnesses.

Children who are prescribed antibiotics for a contagious bacterial infection may return to school after they have been taking the medication for at least 24 hours, have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, and are well enough to participate in the normal daily activities of the program.

Reporting Contagious Illnesses

Families are required to notify Ocean Breeze School by email if their child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness. When appropriate, the school will notify families that a contagious illness has been identified within the program. To protect the privacy of all students and families, no identifying or confidential information will be shared.

Returning to School

Return-to-school requirements depend on the illness, symptoms, and guidance applicable to the individual situation. Unless a different exclusion period applies, children should be fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication, free from vomiting or diarrhea for the period required by school health guidance, and well enough to comfortably participate in the normal activities of the program. The Director may consult the school's Health Care Consultant when determining whether a child may return.

Ocean Breeze School reserves the right to require a written note from a licensed healthcare provider stating that a child is no longer contagious and may safely return to a group setting before readmitting the child to school.

If you are ever unsure whether your child is well enough to attend school, please contact the Director before bringing your child to school.

Ocean Breeze School Health Care Consultant

To ensure a safe environment, we collaborate closely with a qualified health care consultant who provides expert guidance on managing contagious illnesses and other health-related concerns within our school. This partnership allows us to establish clear protocols regarding when a student should remain at home due to illness and how long they should be absent from school to prevent the spread of infections. Our health care consultant helps us make informed decisions that protect the well-being of every child in our care, ensuring that we maintain a healthy learning environment for all.

Health Screening

It is the responsibility of staff to observe each child's overall health and well-being upon arrival and throughout the school day. Staff will consider each child's general appearance, behavior, energy level, and ability to comfortably participate in daily activities.

If a child becomes ill, develops symptoms that meet the school's exclusion criteria, or is unable to comfortably participate in the program, a parent, guardian, or authorized pickup will be contacted and required to pick up the child within a reasonable period of time.

Plan for Meeting the Needs of Ill Children While at School

If your child should become ill while at school you will be notified. If we are unable to contact you, we will reach out to an authorized pickup. Your child will be isolated from the rest of the children. The director or a teacher will remain with the child and help comfort the child until they are picked up.

Plan to Meet the Individual Health Care Needs of Each Child

We ask that parents provide information regarding any allergies, chronic medical conditions, or other health concerns at the time of registration. Parents must complete an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) for any child with a chronic medical condition or allergy requiring medication or special accommodations. This form informs staff of the child's health condition, required medications, and treatment plan. The IHCP must be updated annually or whenever the child's condition changes.

The Individual Health Care Plan will be kept in the child's file, and a list of children with allergies, chronic health conditions, and required medications will be maintained in each classroom. Staff are informed of each child's health condition, medication, and

treatment plan and receive appropriate training from a healthcare professional, the child's healthcare provider, or the child's parent or guardian on implementing the IHCP.

Please note: If your child has an Individual Health Care Plan that requires medication (such as an EpiPen, inhaler, or other emergency medication), the required medication must be provided to the school and remain on-site at all times. Children who require medication under an IHCP may not attend school if the required medication is not available at school.

Plan for Administering Medication

Medication will be administered at school only when necessary and in accordance with EEC regulations and the procedures outlined below.

Medication will be administered only with written parental authorization and a written order from the child's healthcare provider, as outlined in the child's Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) and Medical Consent Form. The first dose of any new medication must be administered by the parent or guardian and may not be given for the first time at school.

In accordance with EEC regulations, all prescription medications must be provided in their original pharmacy-labeled container. The child's name, prescribing healthcare provider's name, medication name, dosage, and administration instructions must be clearly printed on the label. Non-prescription medications prescribed by a healthcare provider must be accompanied by a written, signed, and dated order from the healthcare provider, along with a completed Medical Consent Form.

Parents or guardians are responsible for providing the appropriate measuring device for any medication requiring one. The measuring device will be used exclusively for their child's medication and stored with the medication.

Any unused medication and any medical equipment provided by the family will be returned to the parent or guardian.

Staff members who administer medication will receive the required training in accordance with EEC regulations and the child's Individual Health Care Plan. A written medication log will be maintained for each administration and will include the date, time, dosage, child's name, and the name of the staff member who administered the medication.

Immunizations

Parents must provide OBS with documentation of their child's immunization status in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's recommended immunization schedule, including immunizations against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chickenpox), as well as documentation that a lead screening has been completed. Immunization records must be kept current throughout your child's enrollment.

If your child has an exemption, the appropriate exemption documentation must be submitted and kept on file at OBS. All children attending the program must have either current immunization records or a valid exemption on file at all times.

Plan for Infection Control

OBS is cleaned and sanitized daily in accordance with Massachusetts EEC health and safety regulations. Staff routinely clean and sanitize classroom surfaces, furniture, toys, equipment, and other high-touch areas throughout the day.

Children and staff are required to wash their hands at appropriate times, including after using the restroom, before and after eating, after diapering or toileting, after sensory play involving water, and after contact with bodily fluids. Disposable paper towels are used for hand drying.

All cleaning and disinfecting products are stored securely and out of the reach of children.

Location	Item	Action	Frequency	Notes
Diapering Area	Changing Table	Cleaned and disinfected	After each use	Teachers & Cleaning Staff
Bathrooms	Sinks, toilets, floors	Cleaned and disinfected	After each class use	Teachers & Cleaning Staff
Child Care Space	Doors, knobs, railings, cabinet handles	Cleaned and disinfected	Daily	Teachers & Cleaning Staff
Classrooms	Tables	Cleaned and disinfected	After completed activities, snack & lunch times	Teachers & Cleaning Staff
Classrooms	Tables	Cleaned and disinfected	At the end of the day	Teachers & Cleaning Staff

Classrooms	Chairs	Cleaned and disinfected	Daily	Teachers
Classrooms	Mouthed Toys	Cleaned and disinfected	After use	Teachers
Classrooms	Floors	Swept of Debris	Daily	Teachers & Cleaning Staff
Classrooms/Childcare Space	Floors	Vacuumed, washed and disinfected	Daily	Teachers & Cleaning Staff

Plan for Injury Prevention

OBS provides a safe and nurturing environment. OBS purchases safe and age-appropriate toys, equipment, and materials, and regularly inspects them for any potential hazards. The Director, teachers, and staff are vigilant in monitoring the environment for hazards and safety concerns. All staff are trained in first aid and CPR to respond promptly and effectively in case of an injury.

Managing Injuries & First Aid

The safety and well-being of every child is our highest priority. All staff are trained in pediatric first aid and CPR and will respond promptly to any injury that occurs while a child is in our care.

For minor injuries, such as small cuts, scrapes, or bumps, staff will provide appropriate first aid, including cleaning the area, applying ice if needed, and applying a bandage when appropriate.

Any injury involving the head, regardless of severity, will result in immediate notification to the child's parent or guardian so they are aware of the incident and can monitor their child for any signs of a concussion or other concerns.

In the event of a serious injury or medical emergency, staff will administer first aid, contact emergency medical services (911) when necessary, and notify the child's parent or guardian immediately. If emergency transportation is required, the child will be transported by ambulance to the nearest appropriate medical facility. A staff member will accompany the child whenever possible until a parent, guardian, or emergency contact arrives.

All injuries, regardless of severity, will be documented in Procare. Parents or guardians will receive notification of the incident, the first aid provided, and any follow-up recommendations.

Disposable gloves will be worn whenever first aid involves blood or other bodily fluids to maintain proper infection control. Each classroom is equipped with a fully stocked first aid kit, which teachers carry whenever they leave the classroom or playground. Emergency contact information and medical authorizations are readily accessible through Procure to ensure staff can respond quickly in an emergency.

The Director routinely reviews injury reports to identify trends, address potential hazards, and help maintain a safe environment for all children.

Responsibility for Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency during school hours, Ocean Breeze School will remain responsible for the supervision and care of all students until they are safely reunited with a parent, guardian, or another authorized individual listed in Procure.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, parents should wait for communication and instructions from Ocean Breeze School or emergency personnel before coming to the school or designated reunification location. In some situations, arriving at the school may interfere with emergency response efforts or delay the safe reunification of children with their families.

Once the situation has been assessed and it is safe to do so, Ocean Breeze School will notify families with information regarding the status of the emergency, reunification procedures, and any additional instructions.

For the safety of all children, students will only be released to a parent, guardian, or authorized pickup listed in Procure unless otherwise required by law or directed by emergency personnel. Photo identification may be required before a child is released.

Child Protection Mandate

The staff of Ocean Breeze School are mandated reporters under Massachusetts law. If a staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from abuse or neglect, they are required by law to file a report with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51A.

As mandated reporters, Ocean Breeze School staff will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by DCF or other authorized agencies.

Abuse may include physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. Neglect may include, but is not limited to, the failure to provide a child's basic needs, including adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical care, supervision, or a safe environment.

Ocean Breeze School will make a report whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may have been abused or neglected by any person, including a parent, guardian, caregiver, family member, or non-family member. Staff who fail to fulfill their

mandated reporting responsibilities may be subject to penalties under Massachusetts law.

When appropriate, Ocean Breeze School may also notify local law enforcement or cooperate with other agencies as permitted or required by law.

Arrival & Departure Procedures

The morning program begins promptly at 9:00 a.m., with regular drop-off taking place between 8:45 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

For families needing additional flexibility, Early Drop-Off is available as a convenience between 8:00 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. on school days. No advance registration is required. Families may simply arrive during this time, and the applicable fee will be billed through Procure at the end of the month.

Children must be accompanied to the school entrance and released directly to a staff member. Children may not be dropped off before the program opens or left unattended at any time.

We strongly encourage families to arrive on time each day. Arriving on time gives children the opportunity to settle into the classroom, connect with their teachers and classmates, ease into the day's routine, and fully participate in all planned learning experiences. Consistent arrival also helps children establish predictable routines and supports a successful start to their day.

If your child will be arriving late, please notify the school as soon as possible.

Students arriving after 10:00 a.m. may not be admitted for the day unless the late arrival was approved in advance by the Director or is due to a documented appointment or other circumstance approved by the Director. Families should notify the school as early as possible when a late arrival is anticipated.

Separation & Drop Off

We recognize that separation can be a challenging experience for young children, and this is a normal part of development. Feelings of anxiety during drop-off are common, especially at the beginning of the school year or after time away from school. Please know that our staff is here to support both you and your child through this transition.

A calm, confident goodbye helps reassure children that they are safe and that you will return. While it can be tempting to prolong the goodbye, extended farewells often make the transition more difficult. If your child is having a hard time separating, a staff member will gently assist them into the classroom and provide comfort, reassurance, and support to help them feel safe and engaged.

As children become familiar with the daily routine, most adjust quickly and goodbyes

become easier. If your child continues to have difficulty after you leave, we will contact you to provide an update and discuss any additional support that may be helpful.

Daily Schedule

Our classrooms are thoughtfully designed to foster exploration and learning across various areas. Children engage with a diverse range of activities, including manipulatives, science experiments, math challenges, literacy activities, language development, art, music experiences, dramatic play, and more. Additionally, we provide a spacious gross motor room and two outdoor playgrounds and an outdoor classroom to support physical activity. While our daily schedule is structured, it may adapt to accommodate extracurricular activities and special programs.

Below are general outlines of the typical schedules for both preschoolers and toddlers.

Preschool

8:45 - 9:00 a.m. - School Drop off
 9:00 - 9:15 a.m. - Morning Meeting
 9:15 - 9:45 a.m. - Free Play/Art
 9:45 - 10:15 a.m. - Bathroom/Snack
 10:15 - 10:45 a.m. - Circle
 10:45 - 11:20 a.m. - Free Play/Art
 11:20 - 11:30 a.m. - Clean up/Pack up
 11:30 - 12:00 p.m. - Outside Time
 12:00 p.m. Dismissal

Toddler

8:45 - 9:00 a.m. - Drop-Off
 9:00 - 9:50 a.m. - Free Play & Art
 9:50 - 10:00 a.m. - Cleanup
 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. - Circle
 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. - Handwashing/Bathroom & Snack
 11:00 - 11:30 a.m. - Movement
 11:30 - 12:00 p.m. - Playground
 12:00 p.m. - Dismissal

Early Drop Off for All Students

Early Drop-Off is available beginning at 8:00 a.m. for an additional fee. Students must be dropped off at the designated entrance for their classroom. Families who do not plan to utilize Early Drop-Off are asked not to arrive before 8:45 a.m.

During Early Drop-Off, all participating students are grouped together in the large gross motor room, regardless of age or classroom assignment. Children will have the

opportunity to engage in supervised play until the regular school day begins. Because this is a combined program, children may be supervised by teachers other than their regular classroom teachers and may spend time with students from other classrooms before transitioning to their own classroom at the start of the school day.

Lunch & Extended Day Attendance

To ensure appropriate staffing and preparation, families must decide whether their child will be attending Lunch and/or Extended Day before arriving at school. If your child will be staying for the afternoon, please notify a staff member at drop-off.

Changes to a child's afternoon schedule cannot be accommodated after the school day has begun, except in the case of an emergency. This policy allows staff adequate time to prepare staffing, lunches, activities, and materials for the afternoon programs.

Lunch & Extended Day

Our Lunch and Extended Day programs are available to preschool students for an additional fee. These programs are separate from the regular school day and offer children the opportunity to enjoy lunch, socialize with peers, and participate in additional play and enrichment activities.

Unlike the regular school day, children participating in Lunch and Extended Day are grouped with students from multiple preschool classrooms and may be supervised by teachers other than their regular classroom teacher. Activities take place in a different classroom environment, and children should be comfortable transitioning to a new space, interacting with different classmates, and spending time with different teachers.

Because Lunch and Extended Day are different from the regular school day, we encourage families to carefully consider whether their child is developmentally ready for this transition. Our staff is happy to discuss whether these programs are a good fit for your child.

Participation in Lunch and Extended Day is based on each child's ability to transition successfully, participate safely, and thrive within the program. If the Director determines that the program is not meeting a child's developmental or emotional needs, or that participation is significantly impacting the child or the group, the school may require that the child discontinue participation in Lunch and/or Extended Day.

The school will communicate concerns with the family and, when appropriate, discuss strategies that may support successful participation. Final decisions regarding continued participation in Lunch and/or Extended Day will be made by the Director based on the child's needs and the safe and effective operation of the program.

The Lunch Program runs from 12:15 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Children should arrive at school with a clearly labeled lunch box and water bottle. To keep perishable items fresh, we recommend including an ice pack, as food is not refrigerated at school.

The Extended Day Program runs from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., immediately following lunch. Each day features a different enrichment activity designed to be engaging and developmentally appropriate. A nutritious snack, provided by the school, is served to all Extended Day participants.

Pick-up for both Lunch and Extended Day takes place at the downstairs playground entrance.

Snacks & Lunch

Parents or guardians are responsible for providing a daily snack and a labeled water bottle for their child. Children attending the Lunch Program must also bring a clearly labeled lunch. During Extended Day, a nutritious snack is provided by the school.

Teachers are happy to assist children with opening containers and packaging as needed. To encourage independence, we recommend using lunch containers and packaging that your child can manage as independently as possible. Food may not be shared between children. OBS does not heat food, so all lunches should be packed ready to eat. If your child requires utensils, please be sure to include them in their lunchbox.

Our primary goal is to ensure that every child eats and has the energy they need to fully participate in their day. We encourage families to pack foods they know their child enjoys and is likely to eat. While introducing new foods is important, we recommend doing so at home before sending them to school. Children are often more willing to try unfamiliar foods in a comfortable home environment, and introducing new foods at home also helps identify any potential allergic reactions before they occur at school.

Nut-Free Policy

Ocean Breeze School is a nut-free school. No products containing peanuts or tree nuts, or ingredients derived from them, may be brought to school under any circumstances.

Please read ingredient labels carefully before sending food to school.

- Contains peanuts or tree nuts: Not permitted.
- "May contain peanuts," "May contain tree nuts," or "May contain nuts": Not permitted.
- "Processed in a facility that also processes peanuts or tree nuts": Permitted, provided peanuts or tree nuts are not listed as ingredients.

If you are unsure whether a food item meets our nut-free policy, please contact the school before sending it.

Healthy Food Guidelines

We encourage families to provide a variety of nutritious foods that support children's growth, learning, and energy throughout the day.

Candy and chewing gum are not permitted at school. To help reduce the risk of choking, all food should be cut into age-appropriate, bite-sized pieces.

A guide with healthy snack and lunch ideas is available to help families with meal planning.

Nutritious Snack and Lunch Suggestions

Fruit	Vegetables	Dairy/Protein	Whole Grains
Berries Bananas Clementines Grapes (halved) Apples (whole or sliced) Diced fruits in juice Applesauce Cut-up fresh fruits: melon, pineapple, pears, peaches, plums mango, kiwi Raisins/dried fruit	Carrot Matchsticks Cucumber Slices Snap Peas Broccoli Cherry Tomatoes (halved) Edamame Avocado Guacamole	Low-fat Milk Yogurt Cheese Sticks Cottage Cheese Hummus Cream Cheese Chicken Ham Turkey Roast Beef Tuna Hard Boiled Eggs Chickpeas Tofu	Whole Grain Bread Whole Grain Crackers Graham Crackers Pasta Bagels Granola Bars Pretzels Rice

Clothing

We recommend dressing your child in comfortable clothing that allows them to learn, play, and explore freely. Our curriculum includes a variety of hands-on activities, including art, sensory play, outdoor exploration, and messy play. Please send your child in clothing that can get dirty, as some materials may stain despite our best efforts.

For safety, children are required to wear closed-toe, flat shoes that provide secure support for running, climbing, and active play. Footwear that does not remain securely on the foot or that creates a significant risk of slips, trips, or falls may not be worn during the school day.

Children go outside in a variety of weather conditions throughout the year. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the season, including coats, hats, mittens, boots, or other weather-appropriate clothing as needed.

To encourage independence, we also recommend dressing your child in clothing that is easy for them to manage during toileting. Elastic waistbands and simple fasteners help children use the restroom more independently and confidently.

Please keep accessories simple. Necklaces, bracelets, costume jewelry, watches, oversized hair accessories, and other non-essential items can become distractions

during the school day, interfere with play, or be lost or damaged. We recommend limiting accessories to those that are necessary for keeping hair out of a child's face or that can be worn comfortably throughout the day.

Parents are required to provide a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing, including underwear, socks, and an extra pair of closed-toe shoes, to be kept at school. Please label all clothing and personal belongings with your child's full name.

Labeling Personal Belongings

To help ensure that personal belongings are returned to the correct child, all items brought to Ocean Breeze School must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Backpacks
- Lunch bags
- Water bottles
- Snack containers
- Extra clothing
- Jackets, sweatshirts, and outerwear
- Hats, mittens, and boots
- Blankets or comfort items (when applicable)
- Any additional personal belongings brought to school

Please note that writing a child's name only on the clothing tag is often difficult for staff to locate quickly. We recommend placing labels in a visible location whenever possible.

Ocean Breeze School is not responsible for lost or misplaced personal belongings that are not labeled. While staff will make every reasonable effort to return misplaced items to their owners, unlabeled items cannot always be identified.

Families are encouraged to check labels periodically throughout the year and replace them as they become worn or unreadable.

Backpacks & Lunch Boxes

All children are required to bring a labeled backpack and a labeled lunch box to school each day.

At the end of the day, children are encouraged to independently gather their belongings from their cubbies. To support this independence, please provide a backpack that is appropriately sized to hold your child's daily items, including artwork, folders, and personal belongings. Small backpacks often make it difficult for children to pack and carry their belongings independently.

All children are required to bring a lunch box every day, regardless of



whether they stay for the Lunch Program. All food items, snacks, and water bottles should fit inside the lunch box whenever possible. Having a designated lunch box helps children keep their belongings organized, safely transport their items throughout the school, and build independence in managing their own materials.

Please choose a lunch box that is large enough to hold your child's snack, lunch (if applicable), water bottle, and any necessary utensils while still fitting comfortably inside their backpack.

Toys from Home

To help children stay focused on the classroom environment and prevent toys from being lost, damaged, or shared between children, we ask that personal toys remain at home.

We understand that some children may benefit from bringing a transitional comfort item during the adjustment to school. If needed, a small stuffed animal or comfort item may be brought to school but should remain in the child's backpack throughout the day. After saying goodbye, we encourage children to give their special item one last hug before safely placing it in their backpack until it's time to go home.

If there is a special classroom event or sharing opportunity that invites children to bring an item from home, families will be notified in advance.

Plan for Toileting

Children have access to bathrooms throughout the school day and are encouraged to use the restroom whenever needed. Our staff supports children in developing independence with toileting while recognizing that accidents are a normal part of early childhood.

In the event of a toileting accident, staff will assist children in changing into clean clothing while maintaining their privacy, dignity, and encouraging age-appropriate self-help skills. Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag and sent home at the end of the day. Parents or guardians are responsible for providing a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing for their child to keep at school.

After every toileting routine, children wash their hands with soap and running water and dry them with disposable paper towels.

Once a child is toilet trained, staff will encourage and support independence in the bathroom. If a child requires ongoing toileting assistance after becoming toilet trained, written parental authorization must be provided to the school so staff may assist as needed.

Toilet Training

We are committed to providing a supportive and consistent approach to toilet training that aligns as closely as possible with the routines established at home. Staff will work closely with parents or guardians to understand their child's toilet training routine and will support each child's individual physical and emotional readiness throughout the process.

Children will be encouraged to use the bathroom regularly and may use the restroom whenever needed. Staff will provide reminders, encouragement, and assistance as appropriate while fostering each child's independence and confidence. Potty seats are available and are cleaned and disinfected after each use.

We do our best to mirror the toilet training approach used at home to provide consistency for your child. However, because Ocean Breeze School is a group care setting, we require that all children who are actively toilet training wear an appropriate undergarment, such as a pull-up, training underwear, or underwear, while at school. Children may not attend without an appropriate undergarment, as accidents must be safely contained to maintain a clean and sanitary environment for all children and staff.

If a child's toileting needs require a level of assistance beyond what can reasonably be provided within the classroom routine, the Director will work with the family to identify appropriate supports and determine how the child's needs can be safely met within the group-care setting.

We recognize that accidents are a normal part of the toilet training process and will respond with patience, encouragement, and support. Our goal is to help children develop confidence and independence while working together with families to make toilet training a positive experience.

Diapering Procedure

Children's diapers will be checked frequently throughout the day and changed promptly whenever they become wet or soiled to ensure their comfort, health, and hygiene.

Staff follow Massachusetts EEC diapering procedures and use appropriate sanitary practices during each diaper change, including using individual cleaning materials for each child to prevent cross-contamination. The diaper changing surface is cleaned and disinfected after every use, and staff wash their hands and the child's hands immediately following each diaper change.

Any soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag and sent home with the child at the end of the day.

Playgrounds & Outdoor Classroom

Ocean Breeze School features two designated playgrounds and an Outdoor Classroom

that provide children with opportunities for exploration, movement, and hands-on learning. The toddler playground is designed specifically for our youngest learners, while the preschool playground offers age-appropriate equipment and experiences for preschool students. All children have access to the Outdoor Classroom as part of our curriculum.

Weather permitting, children spend time outdoors each day. Outdoor play is an important part of our program and supports physical development, social interaction, creativity, and a connection with nature. In addition to scheduled outdoor classroom and playground time, children participating in Lunch and Extended Day also have opportunities for outdoor play when weather and schedules permit.

Teachers escort children to and from all outdoor areas and provide active supervision at all times to ensure a safe and enjoyable environment. Children are encouraged to explore, play, and develop confidence while using the playgrounds and Outdoor Classroom.

After-Hours Playground Use Policy

We know many families enjoy spending time on the playground after school, and we are happy to make this space available whenever possible.

Once a child has been dismissed, they are under the supervision and responsibility of their parent or guardian. Children using the playground after school must be directly supervised by an adult at all times. After-hours playground use is not part of Ocean Breeze School's licensed program or supervised school day. School staff who may remain on the premises after dismissal are not responsible for supervising children who have already been released to their parent or guardian.

To help keep the playground safe and in good condition for all children, we kindly ask that families observe the following guidelines:

- Children must be supervised by an adult at all times.
- Please use all playground equipment and toys safely and respectfully.
- Climbing on fences, gates, or playground structures in unintended ways is not permitted.
- Please help return toys and equipment to their designated areas before leaving.

These expectations apply to all children using the playground after school, including siblings and guests.

Our goal is to keep the playground open for families to enjoy after dismissal. However, if these expectations are not followed or safety becomes a concern, Ocean Breeze School reserves the right to suspend or discontinue after-school playground access.

Outdoor Weather Policy

At OBS, we prioritize outdoor play and exploration for our students every day, adhering to the guidelines set forth by the EEC regarding safe outdoor conditions. We strive to provide outdoor time daily; however, during periods of extreme cold or heat, we will limit outdoor activities based on the EEC chart to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

Understand the Weather

Wind-Chill



- 30° is *chilly* and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is *cold*
- 0° to 15° is *very cold*
- 32° to 0° is *bitter cold* with significant risk of *frostbite*
- -20° to -60° is *extreme cold* and *frostbite* is likely
- -60° is *frigid* and exposed *skin will freeze* in 1 minute

Child Care Weather Watch

		Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)									
		Wind Speed in mph									
Air Temperature		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	
	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27	
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13	
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1	
	10	10	-1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15	
	0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29	
	-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43	
	-20	-20	-34	-41	-45	-48	-51	-53	-55	-57	
	-30	-30	-46	-53	-58	-61	-64	-67	-69	-71	
		Comfortable for out door play		Caution		Danger					

Procure & Staying in Touch

Procure is the platform Ocean Breeze School uses for billing, attendance, authorized pick-up information, injury reports, monthly newsletters, and other important school communications. Families are responsible for maintaining an active Procure account and ensuring that all contact information, authorized pick-up information, and emergency contacts remain current and accurate.

Teachers may also use Procure to communicate non-urgent classroom updates throughout the day. Procure is an appropriate way to communicate information that does not require an immediate response, such as:

- Letting a teacher know your child had a difficult morning.
- Asking a general question about your child's day.
- Inquiring about a missing water bottle, jacket, or other belongings.
- Sharing information that can be reviewed when staff are available.

Please remember that our teachers' primary responsibility is the supervision, safety, and engagement of the children in their care. While staff review Procure messages throughout the day as time permits, they may not see or respond to messages immediately.

If your message requires an immediate response, please contact the school using the designated school phone number rather than Procure. Time-sensitive changes involving dismissal or an authorized pickup must be communicated directly to the school and acknowledged by staff before they will be acted upon.

For absences, illnesses, or vacations, please notify the school by sending a Procure message and emailing the school so both the classroom teachers and administration are informed.

Questions regarding enrollment, billing, tuition, policies, scheduling, or other administrative matters should be directed to the Director by email.

Parent Involvement & Volunteering

We welcome parent volunteers throughout the school year and appreciate the many ways families support our program. Each October, a volunteer sign-up will be shared with preschool families, and parents are welcome to volunteer as often as they would like.

Volunteer sessions begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue until the assigned activity is complete. During this time, volunteers may work alongside children to support teacher-directed activities, such as practicing name writing, developing cutting skills, decorating classroom or holiday projects, and other hands-on learning experiences. Volunteers may also assist with classroom preparation, organizing materials, or other projects as needed.

Because the school day continues as usual, volunteers are expected to support the classroom rather than spend time solely with their own child. Before volunteering, we encourage families to consider whether their child is developmentally ready for this experience. Some children find it difficult to understand why their parent is at school but then leaves, which can make the separation more challenging.

If you believe your child may have difficulty with this transition, we recommend waiting until they are more comfortable with the school routine before volunteering. Likewise, if staff feel that a volunteer visit may be disruptive or emotionally challenging for a child, we will discuss our concerns with the family and may recommend postponing the visit until a later date.

For the safety of all children, parent volunteers are never left alone with students and remain under the direct supervision of a staff member at all times.

Please Note: Volunteer opportunities are available only for preschool classrooms, as toddlers are generally not developmentally ready to understand why a parent visits the classroom and then leaves.

Shoot the Breeze!

Shoot the Breeze is Ocean Breeze School's parent organization dedicated to supporting our school community through fundraising, special events, teacher appreciation initiatives, and other activities that enrich the experience of our students, families, and staff.

Shoot the Breeze is led by a dedicated team of parent volunteers who work closely with the school to help plan and coordinate these efforts throughout the year. While the committee has designated members, all Ocean Breeze families are encouraged and welcome to get involved. Whether you can volunteer at an event, help with a project behind the scenes, or lend a hand for a few hours, every contribution makes a difference.

Throughout the school year, volunteer sign-ups will be shared for a variety of events, fundraising opportunities, and school initiatives. Families are encouraged to participate as their schedules allow, and every contribution—big or small—helps strengthen our school community.

We are incredibly grateful for the time, talents, and support of our families. Together, we help create memorable experiences for our children and continue to make Ocean Breeze School a special place to learn, grow, and connect.

Open House/Back to School Night

Each fall, Ocean Breeze School hosts Back to School Night, an adults-only evening designed to help families become familiar with the upcoming school year. During this event, parents and guardians will have the opportunity to meet their child's teachers, learn about the classroom environment, daily routines, curriculum, and expectations, and gain insight into what their child will be experiencing throughout the year.

Back to School Night is also a wonderful opportunity to ask general questions, learn about classroom procedures, and build a strong partnership between home and school. We encourage all families to attend, as the information shared helps lay the foundation for a successful school year.

To allow families to focus on the presentation and discussion, Back to School Night is for parents and guardians only. Children may not attend. Because this event is designed to provide an overview of the classroom and school year, individual questions about a child's progress or specific needs should be discussed privately with the teacher at another time.

Parent Communications & Conferences

At Ocean Breeze School, we believe that a strong partnership between home and school is essential to a child's success. Open, ongoing communication allows us to better understand each child and provide the support they need to thrive. Throughout

the school year, families will have several opportunities to discuss their child's growth, development, and school experience.

Parent Conversations – October

Parent Conversations are held each October with your child's teachers. These meetings provide an opportunity to share your goals for the school year, discuss your child's interests, strengths, and personality, and establish a collaborative plan to support their learning and development.

Written Progress Reports – December

In December, families will receive a written Progress Report highlighting their child's developmental growth, accomplishments, participation, and areas of continued development.

Kindergarten Conferences – February

Families of students eligible to enter Kindergarten the following school year will be invited to a Kindergarten Conference in February. Prior to the meeting, teachers will assess students through developmentally appropriate games, observations, and classroom activities. The conference provides an opportunity to discuss your child's readiness for Kindergarten and plan for a successful transition.

Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences

Families of students who are not entering Kindergarten will participate in a Spring Parent-Teacher Conference. Prior to the conference, teachers will complete age-appropriate assessments through observations and engaging classroom activities. Conferences provide an opportunity to review your child's progress, celebrate accomplishments, and discuss goals for continued growth.

We encourage families to communicate with us throughout the school year—not just during scheduled conferences. Changes at home, family events, developmental milestones, challenges, or concerns can all impact a child's school experience. Sharing this information helps our teachers better understand and support your child.

Likewise, if you have questions or would like to discuss your child's development or school experience, you are always welcome to contact your child's teacher or the Director to schedule a meeting. We value open communication and believe that working together provides the best possible experience for every child.

Birthday Policy & Birthday Parties

At Ocean Breeze School, we love celebrating each child's birthday in a meaningful way! Rather than bringing in treats, we celebrate with our special Birthday Book tradition.

Families are invited to help their child select a favorite book to share with the class on

their birthday. You may choose to donate the book to our classroom library in your child's honor or simply lend it for the day. During circle time, we will read the Birthday Book together and celebrate by singing "Happy Birthday" to your child.

Parents or guardians are welcome to join us during their child's circle time to read the Birthday Book and celebrate with the class. At the conclusion of circle time, we ask that visiting family members say goodbye and allow the school day to continue as usual. While many children transition back into the classroom with ease, some may find it difficult when a parent leaves. We encourage families to consider whether this visit is the right fit for their child and to keep the goodbye brief and positive. Our staff will be there to provide comfort, reassurance, and support if needed.

Children with summer birthdays are welcome to choose another school day during the year to celebrate and share their Birthday Book.

Outside food and birthday treats are not permitted. If you would like to invite classmates to an off-site birthday party, please use the class directory to send invitations directly to families. Ocean Breeze School staff are unable to distribute invitations, gifts, or party favors at school.

Collaboration with Outside Service Providers

Ocean Breeze School recognizes that some children may receive support from outside professionals, such as Early Intervention providers, public school personnel, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, behavioral specialists, or other service providers.

Families are encouraged to share any evaluations, recommendations, IEPs, IFSPs, or other relevant information that may help the school better understand their child's individual needs. With parent or guardian consent, Ocean Breeze School may communicate and collaborate with outside providers when appropriate.

Requests for outside providers to observe or provide services within the classroom will be considered on an individual basis and are subject to the Director's approval. Approval will depend on factors including staffing, scheduling, classroom routines, licensing requirements, the educational needs of the child, and the overall operation of the program.

As a private preschool, Ocean Breeze School is not a therapeutic or special education program and is not able to provide every accommodation or level of support that may be recommended by outside professionals. While we strive to work collaboratively with families whenever appropriate, enrollment does not guarantee that recommended services or accommodations can be implemented within our program.

Ocean Breeze School will consider reasonable supports and accommodations within the scope of its program, staffing, licensing requirements, and ability to safely serve the child and the classroom community. Decisions will be made on an individualized basis rather than solely on the recommendation of an outside provider.

If the Director determines that the school is unable to safely or appropriately meet a child's needs, the Director will work with the family to discuss appropriate next steps and, when possible, assist with referrals to programs or services better equipped to provide the necessary level of support.

Snow Day/Inclement Weather

Ocean Breeze School generally follows the Marblehead Public Schools' decision regarding weather-related closures. If Marblehead Public Schools are closed or transition to a virtual learning day due to inclement weather, Ocean Breeze School will also be closed.

If Marblehead Public Schools announce a delayed opening or early dismissal, the Director will assess local weather and road conditions and determine whether Ocean Breeze School can safely operate. In some situations, Ocean Breeze School may choose to close, delay opening, or dismiss early even if Marblehead Public Schools remain open.

Families will be notified of any schedule changes as early as possible through email and/or Procure.

As outlined in our Tuition & Billing policy, tuition is not adjusted or refunded for weather-related closures.

Compliance with School Policies

Ocean Breeze School is built on a partnership between families and staff. To provide a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment, all families are expected to follow the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook and to treat students, families, staff, volunteers, and visitors with courtesy and respect.

Families are expected to:

- Follow all school policies, procedures, and health and safety requirements.
- Communicate respectfully with school staff and other families.
- Participate in meetings and collaborate in good faith on agreed-upon behavior support plans, safety strategies, and other interventions when applicable.
- Attend requested meetings regarding their child.
- Provide accurate and timely information regarding their child.
- Meet financial obligations, including tuition and fees, in accordance with the school's payment policies.
- Follow all arrival, dismissal, and attendance procedures.

When concerns arise, Ocean Breeze School will make reasonable efforts to address them through open communication and collaboration. Depending on the nature of the concern, this may include verbal communication, written documentation, meetings with the Director, or other corrective measures.

Failure to comply with school policies, repeated disregard for school procedures, non-payment of tuition or fees, failure to participate in required meetings or support plans, or behavior by a parent, guardian, or other authorized adult that is disruptive, threatening, abusive, harassing, intimidating, or otherwise interferes with the safe and respectful operation of the school may result in suspension or termination of enrollment.

Whenever possible, families will receive written notice before enrollment is suspended or terminated. Advance notice may not be possible when the Director determines that a child or adult's actions create an immediate safety risk, materially interfere with the school's ability to safely operate, or otherwise require immediate action. Decisions regarding suspension or termination will be based on the individual circumstances, applicable school policies, prior efforts to address the concern when appropriate, and the health, safety, and well-being of the school community.

Access to St. Stephen's & Ocean Breeze School

Ocean Breeze School is located within St. Stephen's United Methodist Church. During school hours, Ocean Breeze School staff have access to the building. Because the school operates within the church, the Pastor and Treasurer of St. Stephen's Church also have access as needed to fulfill their responsibilities related to the church and facility.

Individuals with facility access who are not Ocean Breeze School staff do not assume responsibility for the care or supervision of students and are expected to follow applicable school safety and visitor procedures while children are present.

Every effort is made to schedule building maintenance, repairs, and other facility-related work outside of school hours to minimize disruptions and maintain a safe learning environment. If maintenance or other work must occur while children are present, Ocean Breeze School will take appropriate steps to ensure student safety and, when appropriate, notify families.

Ocean Breeze School utilizes four entrances: two designated for student arrival and dismissal and two that provide access to the outdoor play areas. For the safety and security of our students and staff, all exterior doors remain locked during the school day.

Throughout the year, Ocean Breeze School welcomes prospective families and other approved visitors. Tours are scheduled directly with the Director and conducted by the Director to ensure a safe and secure environment while providing families with an opportunity to learn about our program.

All visitors, including contractors, vendors, and other guests, are required to sign in upon arrival, provide the purpose of their visit, and follow all school safety procedures while on the premises.

Soccer Shots

OBS is happy to partner with Soccer Shots, an independent company that offers soccer programming for preschool students. Soccer Shots sessions take place during our Extended Day program and are offered in the fall, winter, and spring. The day of the week that soccer is held may vary each season based on the availability of the Soccer Shots team.

Each season is limited to 10 students. Enrollment is open only to children who are scheduled to attend OBS on the day soccer takes place. For example, if Soccer Shots is held on Thursdays, only students who attend school on Thursdays are eligible to participate. Students may not be dropped off in the afternoon solely to attend Soccer Shots, as this can be disruptive and create a difficult transition into the program.

Please note that Soccer Shots manages its own registration and payments independently of OBS. While we are happy to host the program, OBS is not involved in the registration process or payment handling.

We do our best to rotate the day of the week each season to give more students an opportunity to participate; however, this ultimately depends on the availability of the Soccer Shots coaches.

Student Teachers

Ocean Breeze School is proud to partner with North Shore Community College and other approved educational institutions to provide field experience opportunities for students pursuing careers in early childhood education.

Student teachers receive an orientation to Ocean Breeze School's policies, procedures, and expectations and work under the direct supervision of the Director and experienced classroom teachers. They may assist with classroom activities, observe teaching practices, and interact with children as part of their educational experience.

Student teachers are never left alone with children, are not counted in required staff-to-child ratios, and do not assume responsibility for the supervision of a classroom. They remain under the supervision of Ocean Breeze School staff and, when applicable, their college supervisor throughout their placement.

Behavior Support & Safety Policy

Ocean Breeze School's Behavior Support & Safety policy describes our approach to developmentally appropriate behavior support, unsafe behavior, family collaboration, individualized support, safety review, and circumstances in which the school may determine that it can no longer safely or appropriately meet a child's needs. The complete policy follows as an appendix to this handbook.



APPENDIX A

Behavior Support & Safety at Ocean Breeze School



At Ocean Breeze School, we believe that behavior is a form of communication. Young children are still developing the social-emotional skills needed to express their feelings, solve problems, manage frustration, and build positive relationships with others. Our role is to teach these skills through patience, consistency, and guidance while maintaining a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for every child.

Our goal is to teach children the social-emotional skills they need to be successful while maintaining a safe environment where every child can learn, grow, and thrive.

We recognize that every child develops at their own pace and tailor our approach to meet each child's individual needs while ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and staff.

Most challenging behaviors can be addressed through routine classroom support and guidance. When a behavior creates a safety risk to the child, other children, or staff, additional intervention may be required.

Our Approach to Behavior Support

When a child is experiencing challenges, teachers first work to understand the underlying cause of the behavior before determining the most appropriate response. Rather than focusing solely on the behavior itself, we consider the child's developmental stage, emotions, environment, and individual needs.

Depending on the situation, teachers may:

- Help children identify and express their feelings using age-appropriate language.
- Model positive social interactions, including sharing, taking turns, problem-solving, and respectful communication.
- Coach children through conflicts and encourage them to develop solutions.
- Use positive reinforcement to recognize appropriate choices and successful problem-solving.
- Redirect children to another activity or area when needed.
- Offer choices that promote independence and self-regulation.

- Teach calming strategies and emotional regulation skills.
- Maintain consistent routines and clear expectations that help children feel secure and successful.

Ocean Breeze School does not use time-out as a disciplinary practice. If a child needs space to regain self-control or take a break from a situation, staff remain engaged with the child while providing guidance, support, and redirection.

Teachers consistently reinforce two important expectations:

- Children may not hurt themselves or others, including staff members.
- Children may not intentionally damage school property or the belongings of others.

These expectations are communicated using simple, positive, and age-appropriate language.

Developmental Considerations

While Ocean Breeze School responds consistently to behaviors that impact the safety of others, we also recognize that children's developmental stages influence why these behaviors occur.

Behaviors that may cause harm to others, including but not limited to biting, hitting, kicking, scratching, pushing, grabbing, spitting, throwing objects, or other unsafe physical behaviors, are more commonly observed in toddlers, who are still developing language, impulse control, emotional regulation, and social skills. At this stage, these behaviors are often a child's way of communicating frustration, excitement, sensory needs, fatigue, or other emotions they are not yet able to express with words. Our response focuses on understanding the underlying cause of the behavior, teaching communication, modeling appropriate behaviors, and supporting the development of self-regulation and positive social interactions.

As children enter the preschool years, they typically develop stronger communication, self-regulation, and problem-solving abilities. While unsafe behaviors can still occur, they become less developmentally expected and may indicate that a child is experiencing difficulty managing emotions, navigating peer interactions, coping with stress, or communicating their needs effectively. Because of this, repeated unsafe behaviors in preschool-aged children often require increased intervention, individualized supports, and closer collaboration with families.

Interventions are always based on the child's developmental level, the severity and frequency of the behavior, the effectiveness of previous interventions, and the overall impact on the classroom environment.

Unsafe Behaviors

The safety of our students and staff is always our highest priority.

Unsafe behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Biting
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Scratching
- Pushing
- Spitting
- Throwing objects
- Attempting to bite or strike another person
- Running from staff or designated supervision areas
- Climbing fences or other unsafe structures
- Intentional destruction of school property
- Any behavior that causes or creates a significant risk of physical harm to another child or staff member
- Any behavior that significantly compromises the safety of the child, other students, or staff

The school considers the child's developmental level, the nature and severity of the behavior, its frequency or pattern, and its impact on the safety of the classroom when determining the appropriate response. An isolated developmentally expected behavior does not necessarily result in progression through the behavior support process.

Whenever an unsafe behavior occurs, staff respond immediately, calmly, and consistently.

Our response includes:

- Ensuring the immediate safety of all children and staff.
- Separating the children involved, when appropriate.
- Providing comfort and first aid when needed.
- Supporting the child in regaining self-control through calm guidance and redirection.
- Documenting the incident in Procare.
- Notifying the parents or guardians of all children directly involved.

To protect student privacy, families will receive information regarding their own child's involvement and the school's response but will not receive confidential information about another child.

Depending on the severity of the incident, the child's developmental level, and the overall safety of the classroom, the Director may require immediate pick-up or other immediate interventions to ensure the safety of the school community.

The school maintains documentation of significant behavioral incidents, interventions implemented, communication with families, and Behavior Support Plans, when applicable.

Progressive Behavior Support Process

When challenging or unsafe behaviors continue despite classroom interventions, Ocean Breeze School follows a progressive process designed to support the child while maintaining a safe learning environment for all students and staff.

Because every child and situation is unique, the Director may modify or accelerate this process based on the child's developmental level, the severity or frequency of the behavior, or immediate safety concerns. The levels below are intended to provide a framework for increasing support and intervention and do not require the school to complete each level sequentially before taking action necessary to maintain safety.

Level 1: Classroom Intervention

Teachers implement developmentally appropriate behavior support strategies, including observation, redirection, coaching, environmental modifications, emotional regulation support, and positive reinforcement.

Families will receive verbal communication at dismissal or communication through Procure regarding individual incidents.

Level 2: Increased Monitoring & Family Collaboration

If behaviors become repetitive, increase in frequency or intensity, or begin affecting the child's ability to participate safely in the classroom, the Director will become involved.

At this stage, the school may:

- Increase observation and documentation.
- Identify behavioral patterns and possible triggers.
- Meet with the family to discuss concerns.
- Develop consistent strategies between home and school.
- Increase communication regarding progress.

Families will be informed when behaviors demonstrate an emerging pattern rather than waiting until a crisis occurs. Open and ongoing communication between home and school is essential to successfully supporting a child's development.

Level 3: Individualized Behavior Support

If behaviors continue despite previous interventions, the school may implement a formal Behavior Support Plan outlining specific goals, classroom strategies, communication expectations, and methods for monitoring progress.

Additional supports may include:

- Environmental or schedule modifications.

- Recommendations for outside evaluations or consultations with behavioral, developmental, or medical professionals.
- Collaboration with outside providers when appropriate.

Recommendations for outside evaluations or services are intended to help the school better understand and support the child's needs. Active participation from families is expected throughout this process, including maintaining communication with the school, attending requested meetings, collaborating on agreed-upon strategies, and considering and, when appropriate, pursuing recommended evaluations or outside supports that may help the school and family better understand and address the child's needs.

Level 4: Safety Review

If a child's behavior continues to create significant safety concerns despite consistent interventions and family collaboration, or if behaviors substantially disrupt the learning environment or prevent staff from safely supervising the group, the Director will conduct a formal review to determine whether Ocean Breeze School can continue to safely and appropriately meet the child's needs within the program.

At this stage, the Director may require:

- A modified school schedule.
- Temporary suspension.
- Additional outside support prior to returning.
- Other individualized safety measures deemed necessary.

Families will be notified when behaviors have reached this level of concern and will be informed that continued unsafe or significantly disruptive behaviors may jeopardize the child's continued enrollment.

Level 5: Withdrawal from the Program

Withdrawal from the program is not intended as a disciplinary consequence. It may become necessary when, despite reasonable interventions and collaboration, the school determines that it cannot safely and appropriately meet a child's needs within the group-care environment.

While Ocean Breeze School is committed to supporting children within our program whenever possible, there may be situations in which a child's behavior continues to pose a significant safety risk or substantially interferes with the school's ability to safely operate despite reasonable interventions and collaborative efforts.

If the Director determines that Ocean Breeze School is unable to safely or appropriately meet a child's needs within the program, the school reserves the right to require withdrawal from the program.

The Director reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of intervention based on the child's developmental level, the severity and frequency of the behavior, the effectiveness of previous interventions, the child's response to intervention, the family's participation in the behavior support process, and the school's ability to safely meet the child's needs while protecting the health, safety, and well-being of all children and staff.

The safety of the entire school community will always remain our highest priority.